

MAY 10 1967

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NUCLEAR DIVISION



POST OFFICE BOX X
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE 37830

May 8, 1967

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School
of Medicine
Stanford Medical Center
Palo Alto, California 94304

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

My long delay in responding to your stimulating reflections of March 27 reflects how time-consuming bureaucratic considerations far from eumanics can be.

I agree that the university must be the prime instrument for what you call "critical optimization," and with the importance of efforts to stimulate mutual exploration between social scientists and life scientists. However, these efforts do not add up to what I had in mind as a "demonstration" of the eumanics approach. I share your view that our educations do not prepare us for such a task; however, a demonstration may be necessary before we can specify what forms of preparation are most desirable.

By a demonstration, I mean an effort to tackle a particular societal problem according to eumanics. The activity would involve persons with diverse formal training and career experience. The demonstration would not involve a great deal of expense or of administrative effort. I envision a group of not less than 10 and not more than 20 persons which would spend perhaps a month working intensively together during an initial summer and then meet perhaps once a month during the subsequent year. The summer period would be devoted to specifying the problem and the considerations affecting its solution were a eumanics approach to be applied. The subsequent meetings would refine and update this framework, trace its implications, make predictions on the basis of it, and assess the implications of alternative coping solutions. (These meetings would be similar in nature to the decision seminars proposed by Lasswell in The Future of Political Science, New York: Atherton Press, 1963, pp. 125-40.) I would expect this strategy not to produce convincing "answers" to the societal problem,

but to have three positive results: (1) clarify what skills and perspectives are needed to effectively pursue eumanics (what our educations should provide); (2) generate a larger group of intellectuals with the commitment and experience to diffuse the eumanics approach; and (3) shake the minds of those involved in some narrow or even ostensibly broad part of the problem to which the demonstration is addressed. All the participants would consciously treat the demonstration as an experiment for self and group analysis and dissection.

With regard to the role of social scientists in such a demonstration, I would see it as an application of the perspectives which Lasswell states in his introduction to Lerner and Lasswell, The Policy Sciences, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1951, pp. 3-15.

Do these notions seem at all well-founded? Are they too vague for you to tell? I look forward to continuing our discussion.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Davis B. Bobrow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Davis" being more prominent.

Davis B. Bobrow
Director's Division

DBB:pd